

will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

SUPPLEMENTAL IMPACT AID FLEXIBILITY ACT

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2959) to provide that, due to the disruptions caused by COVID-19, applications for impact aid funding for fiscal year 2023 may use certain data submitted in the fiscal year 2022 application.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 2959

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act”.

SEC. 2. IMPACT AID PROGRAM.

Due to the public health emergency directly relating to COVID-19 and notwithstanding sections 7002(j) and 7003(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7702(j), 7703(c)), a local educational agency desiring to receive a payment under section 7002 or 7003 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 7702, 7703) for fiscal year 2023 that also submitted an application for such payment for fiscal year 2022 shall, in the application submitted under section 7005 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 7705) for fiscal year 2023—

(1) with respect to a requested payment under section 7002 of such Act—

(A) use the data described in section 7002(j) of such Act relating to calculating such payment that was submitted by the local educational agency in the application for fiscal year 2022; or

(B) use the data relating to calculating such payment for the fiscal year required under section 7002(j) of such Act; and

(2) with respect to a requested payment under section 7003 of such Act—

(A) use the student count data relating to calculating such payment that was submitted by the local educational agency in the application for fiscal year 2022, provided that payments for fiscal year 2023 shall be calculated by the Secretary using the expenditures and rates described in clauses (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv) of section 7003(b)(1)(C) of such Act that would otherwise apply for fiscal year 2023; or

(B) use the student count data relating to calculating such payment for the fiscal year required under section 7003(c) of such Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 2959.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge Members to support the Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act introduced by Senator SMITH from Minnesota and Senator THUNE from South Dakota. The companion bill was introduced by the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) and the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON).

It is difficult to overstate the importance of Impact Aid for our Nation's children. For over 70 years, this program has been critical to ensuring that schools that serve children connected to Federal lands have the resources to help their students thrive.

Unlike most public schools in America, these schools do not receive funding from property taxes from these Federal assets. This means that without Impact Aid support, because they still have to educate the children attached to those assets, this means that without Impact Aid schools serving the children connected to military bases, affordable housing units, or Native Americans on reservations and many other institutions would be significantly shortchanged, and therefore, unable to offer high-quality education.

The need for this program is now greater than ever as our school communities grapple with a resurgence of COVID-19.

In response, Democrats and Republicans worked together in the last Congress led by, again, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) and the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) to enact the Impact Aid Coronavirus Relief Act. That bill ensured that during the pandemic schools continued to have access to Impact Aid funding that accurately reflected their student populations, whether or not those students could accurately be counted as physically in those schools because of the complications created by the coronavirus pandemic.

Today, we have the responsibility to, once again, join together in providing schools the support and flexibility they need to serve their students.

The Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act will go a long way toward ensuring that all students in this country, no matter where they go to school, will have access to high-quality education.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 2959, the Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act. This bill would allow school districts participating in the Impact Aid program to use previously reported student headcounts on their Impact Aid applications for the 2022–2023 school year.

Impact Aid supplements funding for schools and students in areas that col-

lect less in local property taxes due to the Federal Government's presence. School districts that receive Impact Aid payments include those with military bases, Indian reservations, and Federal low-income housing in or near the school district.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a big toll on school districts and communities across the country. It is especially difficult for federally impacted school districts to calculate headcounts due to fluctuations during the pandemic.

Headcounts determine how much aid more than 1,000 federally impacted school districts receive. That aid helps pay for staff salaries, busing, technology, and other educational supports and services for students. This bill ensures the Impact Aid recipients will not be affected negatively by the pandemic and temporary falling enrollment that have resulted. This frees up valuable time and resources to help students, while schools maintain a reliable source of funding as they address the academic, social, emotional, and safety needs of the students.

This bill will have no impact on government spending because Impact Aid is a discretionary program, and its funding level is established through the annual appropriations process.

The trade association for Impact Aid school districts, the National Association for Federally Impacted Schools, is strongly supportive of this bill.

This bill is similar to the one signed into law by President Trump on December 4, 2020.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support S. 2959, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY), the sponsor of the House version of the bill.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the bipartisan Impact Aid Flexibility Act, S. 2959, which is a companion bill to H. 6126, which I introduced on December 2, 2021. I thank Chairman SCOTT and Ranking Member FOXX, and her representative this evening, Mr. OWENS, of the Education and Labor Committee, and the committee staff for accelerating consideration of this important measure which provides Federal support to 11 million K–12 schoolchildren across America, and whose passage is very time sensitive, which I will explain in a minute.

Mr. Speaker, Federal Impact Aid is our Nation's oldest K–12 Federal education program. Impact Aid has its origins in 1821 when Congress first authorized support for schools to educate military dependent children.

In 1934, Congress passed the Johnson-O'Malley Act, which extended help to school districts located at federally recognized Tribal lands. Congress recognized that, like military school districts, kids residing on Native American Tribal lands, which were not subject to State or local taxation to fund schools, deserved assistance.

In 1950, President Harry Truman signed into law the statutory framework for Impact Aid which still stands today. Impact Aid is an important statement to communities that host children who reside in and are connected to Federal property and facilities, namely, that the Nation will not force them to bear an unfair disproportionate cost to public education.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent a district with two of those host communities, Groton and Ledyard, Connecticut. Groton is the home to our Nation's oldest Navy submarine base with approximately 9,000 sailors and officers who work every day to protect our Nation. Ledyard is the town next door where many personnel live. Groton has over 1,000 Navy kids, and Ledyard has 850. Ledyard is also the site of the Mashantucket Tribal Nation, many of whose children attend Ledyard schools. Impact Aid is critical to these towns' school budgets.

The bill before us addresses an urgent logistical problem with Impact Aid, that, unless we act, will harm military and Tribal districts all across the country, namely, the obstacle created by COVID, to get an accurate headcount of eligible students that must be filed with the U.S. Department of Education by January 31, 12 days from now. And that, again, is the time-sensitive urgency this evening. Military and Tribal districts across the country have reported that COVID restrictions have slowed down the paperwork process, and this hindrance will result in an undercount, and thus, an artificially low Federal reimbursement.

The Impact Aid Flexibility Act will solve this problem in an elegant way by simply carrying over last year's student census, thus ensuring no Impact Aid district will be harmed financially. This is a 1-year fix, the same as the fix the last Congress passed in December 2020, the Impact Aid Coronavirus Relief Act, which I sponsored with my Republican colleague, DUSTY JOHNSON of South Dakota.

Mr. Speaker, this vote is being watched nervously by school officials and military staff all across the Nation, such as Groton school superintendent, Susan Austin, Ledyard superintendent, Jason Hartling, and Miranda Chapman, the Navy School liaison officer at the Groton SUBASE, New London, who have worked with the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools, and I salute them and all their colleagues across the country for their work raising this issue before Congress.

The bill before us has already passed the U.S. Senate unanimously and has the support of the Biden administration. It is a bill that keeps the promise to host communities that a high-quality education will not be denied because of military service or Tribal recognition.

I urge the House to pass this bill tonight with an overwhelming vote of confidence and thanks for those who

wear the uniform of this country and our Tribal nations and their families.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, the Impact Aid program represents the Federal Government's promise to provide school districts with additional assistance when property taxes are lower because of the presence of military, Federal, or Tribal lands.

Every year, affected school districts take count of the federally connected students through a take-home survey.

This headcount determines the district's Impact Aid reimbursement, which can help pay for teacher salaries, technology, and student support services.

Throughout the pandemic, school systems across the Nation have worked through many challenges to continue serving students. Conducting these Impact Aid surveys have been no different.

That is why the Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act will allow school districts to reuse their FY22 student counts and property tax data when submitting their upcoming FY23 applications at the end of January.

This additional reporting flexibility will be helpful to many of the 1,100 federally impacted school districts, including Richmond County schools in my district, which serves the great community of Fort Gordon and our great base there, a U.S. Army installation.

I am proud to support the Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act. I believe that it will provide much-needed assurance for school systems.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. OWENS for yielding and for his leadership on this issue.

I rise today in support of the Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act. The pandemic has had a dramatic impact on our school systems and the way students are learning, both in and out of the classroom. Many parents have made the decision to homeschool their children due to uncertainty around vaccine and mask mandates in schools. With many resources of local educational agencies dedicated to fighting the pandemic, it has also become a burden on them to maintain an accurate count of federally connected students.

I am grateful for the bipartisan leadership today of Chairman SCOTT and Ranking Member FOXX, who support this legislation. This bill takes proactive measures to ensuring that teachers and students are adequately supported when returning to the classroom. By allowing local educational agencies to use the same number of federally connected students that they enrolled on their fiscal year '22 applications as they do fiscal year '23 applica-

tions, we can allow them to focus on recovering from the pandemic and serve the children of our United States servicemembers adequately.

As a representative of Fort Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina, and also nearby Fort Jackson in Georgia, ably represented by Congressman RICK ALLEN, we have multiple beneficiaries of Impact Aid funding. I am grateful to support this legislation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act ensures that students and schools relying on Impact Aid will not be affected negatively by the pandemic.

Specifically, the bill allows schools to use their previously reported headcounts so that services students rely on will continue. This frees up administrators to use their valuable time and resources addressing the educational needs of the students.

Students in over 1,000 federally impacted districts deserve the resources they receive from the Impact Aid program. This aid helps pay for a wide range of services that students rely on from bussing and technology to educational support services.

I encourage my colleagues to support S. 2959, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1800

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, over the last 2 years, Congress has taken historic steps to help schools recover from the pandemic because we know that every school and every student and every family has felt the tragic effects of COVID-19.

However, we cannot fully achieve that goal if we fail to address the unique challenges facing schools that serve students connected with military bases, affordable housing, Native American reservations, and other Federal properties.

Last Congress, Democrats and Republicans came together and, as a Nation, tackled the first strain of COVID-19. We came together to address these challenges and to provide urgent support for Impact Aid schools.

Now, as we confront a new COVID threat, we must provide the support that federally connected children need under the Federal Impact Aid program. By providing the support and flexibility in this legislation, we will help ensure that Impact Aid schools can keep their teachers and staff on the payroll, purchase textbooks and learning supplies, and keep the lights on in their classrooms. And this bill will help ensure that hundreds of thousands of students have access to a quality education.

Again, I thank the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), as well as, in the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) and

the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) for sponsoring the legislation; and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. OWENS) and the committee ranking member, Ms. FOXX, as well as the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), for their help in advancing this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Supplemental Impact Aid Flexibility Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 2959.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1834

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 6 o'clock and 34 minutes p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 18, 2022.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a scanned copy of a letter received from Ms. Maria Matthews, Esq., Director, Division of Elections, Florida Department of State, indicating that, according to the 1st unofficial results for the Special General Election held January 11, 2022, the Honorable Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick was elected for Representative to Congress for the Twentieth Congressional District, State of Florida.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
January 17, 2022.

Hon. CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk, House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MS. JOHNSON: Per your request, please find attached the scanned image of

the certificates signed by the respective canvassing boards for Broward and Palm Beach Counties showing the 1st unofficial results for the Special General Election held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 for Representative in Congress from the 20th Congressional District of Florida.

It would appear from the certificates of 1st unofficial results that Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick has received the most votes as follows:

Broward County, 32,854 of the 39,939 votes cast.

Palm Beach County, 11,840 of the 16,895 votes cast.

No recount was triggered. To the best of our knowledge and belief at this time, no contest has been filed in this election.

By law, the official returns from these counties are due no later than noon on January 23, 2022. Once received, the State Elections Canvassing Commission, will meet at 9 am on January 25, 2022, to certify the official returns as submitted by these two counties. As soon as the official results are certified, an official Certificate of Election will be prepared for transmittal as required by law.

Respectfully,

MARIA MATTHEWS, Esq.,
Director, Division of Elections.

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, OF FLORIDA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentlewoman from Florida, the Honorable SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, be permitted to take the oath of office today.

Her certificate of election has not arrived, but there is no contest and no question has been raised with regard to her election.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. Will the Representative-elect and the Members of the Florida delegation present themselves in the well.

All Members will rise and the Representative-elect will raise her right hand.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now a Member of the 117th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Madam Speaker, as the dean of the Florida delegation, I have the honor of welcoming Representative SHEILA CHERFILUS-McCORMICK of Florida's 20th District to the United States House of Representatives.

Our new colleague will fill the seat of my late dear friend, Alcee Hastings. Now, similar to the district that I am honored to represent, Florida's 20th District is extremely diverse and covers urban and agricultural areas in both Palm Beach and Broward Counties.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK is the proud daughter of Haitian immigrants, and she was born in Brooklyn, New York.

Madam Speaker, after finishing college at Howard University, she moved to Florida to attend St. Thomas University School of Law.

Although she left Florida to become a project manager at the New York City Transit Authority, it wasn't long before Florida's sunshine brought her back to Florida. In 1999, she joined Trinity Health Care Services and eventually became the company's CEO.

Madam Speaker, this once single mother is the epitome of the American Dream and represents the aspiration of so many of our South Florida neighbors. I look forward, Madam Speaker, to working with our newest colleague on the issues of importance to our country and to South Florida. Florida's congressional delegation is honored to welcome Congresswoman CHERFILUS-McCORMICK to the United States House of Representatives.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK), who is our newest Member of Congress.

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK. Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. DIAZ-BALART for those kinds words and introduction.

I would first like to thank my family: my husband, Corlie McCormick, my daughter, Ismanie McCormick, and son, Jackson McCormick, who are in the gallery.

I would like to thank my team and my family, and especially God, who has brought us this far.

I am a child of immigrant parents who risked their lives to come to the United States. I thank my colleagues who fought for me even before I was born here to ensure that immigrants can actually have a place in our country and can live the American Dream. So I thank Members in advance because that is how I got here.

I also want to thank the 20th District who fought with us and who believed in a new voice and is giving this little Haitian-American girl a chance to fight for our country.

I would like to say a special thank you for all the pastors who prayed. I pledge to work as hard as I can, tirelessly, to ensure that District 20 and the United States are getting their needs met. I pledge to work as hard as